country due to financial stringency, non-payment due to bankruptcy of overseas buyers, and commercial disputes, etc. MMTC have taken legal steps wherever feasible to realise the export proceeds.

[Translation]

Closure of Textile Mills

*327. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA :
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of workers working in the textile mills of Gujarat;

(b) whether a large number of workers of textile mills in Gujarat have been rendered jobless due to closure;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for closure;

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to revive those mills; and

(e) the assistance provided by the Government for modernisation and renovation of sick/closed textile mills of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The number of workers working in textile mills of Gujarat is 1.78 lakhs approx.

(b) and (c). As on 31.3.96, no Cotton/Man-made Fibre Textile Mill was closed under I.D. Act in Gujarat. 23 mills were closed under liquidation and 32 mills were closed mainly due to financial difficulties. Number of workers affected was 93741.

(d) and (e). Government has set up Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) to enquire into the working of sick industrial companies and to prepare and sanction, as appropriate, schemes for their revival.

Government had disbursed an amount of Rs. 180.00 crs. as on 31.12.93 as modernisation assistance in respect of 47 cases in Gujarat under Textile Modernisation Fund Scheme.

[English]

NTC Mills in M.P.

*328. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of mills operated by National Textile Corporation;

(b) the details of the scheme, if any for their rationalisation and smooth operation;

(c) the main points being considered by the Government under rationalisation policy; and

(d) the steps taken by the Union Government to provides sufficient funds for their smooth operation and implementation of rationalisation scheme particularly in the units of Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) There are 120 nationalised mills under the National Textile Corporation Ltd. (Holding Company) and its nine subsidiary corporations.

(b) to (d). On account of obsolete machinery due to lack of modernisation and acute shortage of working capital, the NTC has been incurring losses leading to its net worth erosion. As a result, 8 out of 9 subsidiary corporations of NTC have been referred to and declared sick by the BIFR. Government has approved a revised Turn Around Plan in 1995 for NTC mills involving modernisation of 79 mills at a cost of Rs. 2005.72 crores, restructuring of 36 unviable mills into 18 viable units, rationalisation of surplus workforce etc. This plan is generally in line with the modernisation plan prepared by the Textile Research Associations. The funds for modernisation will be raised from sale of surplus lands and assets of NTC mills. The revised Turn Around Plan covers the seven mills under NTC (MP) Ltd. Out of the 7 mills under NTC (MP), 2 unviable mills will be merged into one viable unit and the remaining six units are proposed to be modernised at an outlay of Rs. 203.69 crores. The modernisation plan has been placed before the BIFR for their approval before implementation. Meanwhile to avoid any hardship to the workers, Government has been meeting the shortfall faced by NTC mills in payment of wages and salaries.

[Translation]

Fire in Coal Mines

*329. SHRI KACHARU BHAU RAUT : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether fire in the various coal mines of the country particularly in Dhanbad has endangered the lives of lakhs of people;

(b) if so, the details of lose of life and properly due to fire in coal mines; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to control and extinguish fire to save the coal reserves and lives and properly of lakhs of people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. However, shallow coal mine fires particularly in Jharia Coalfield in Dhanbad District are likely to affect persons living around these fires necessitating their shifting from the fire areas.

(b) While no loss of life has been reported, damage to some property has occurred due to these shallow coal mine fires. The loss of coal in these fires is unavoidable on account of the coal being the main